

## *Joachim Octave Fernández* 1896–1978

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE 1931–1941  
DEMOCRAT FROM LOUISIANA

Joachim O. Fernández, a native New Orleanian and a veteran of the city's tangled political scene, served as a U.S. Representative during the tumultuous 1930s. Attentive to his east New Orleans constituency, he sought federal dollars for major infrastructure improvements to revive employment during the Great Depression and supported the expansion and modernization of the U.S. Navy. With a seat on the Naval Affairs Committee and later on, the Appropriations Committee, he was well situated to achieve these goals. But Fernández's political fortunes were entwined with those of the statehouse political machine ruled by Huey P. Long, the flamboyant and ruthless boss of Louisiana politics. Fernández jettisoned the city Democrats who helped launch his political career and migrated his allegiance to Long's organization, embarking on a decade-long House career that benefited from Long's largesse. "I fought the city machine, and by the grace of God and the help of Senator Long I was elected to Congress," said Fernández on the House Floor.<sup>1</sup>

Joachim Octave (Joe) Fernández was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, on August 14, 1896, to Octave Gonzales Fernández and Mary (Benson) Fernández. According to census records, Octave's father, V. G. Fernández, was born in Spain and emigrated to the United States, where he worked as a merchant. Octave Fernández, a native New Orleanian, served in the Louisiana state house of representatives and died in office in 1921. Joachim was the second of six children who were raised in the family home on Dauphine Street in eastern New Orleans, several blocks north of the Mississippi River.<sup>2</sup> He completed the elementary grades at public school and a local private school, Cecil Barrois, but did not attend high school or college. He worked as an expert on shipping fees and storage tariffs. On June 3, 1920, Fernández married the

former Viola Murray, a native of Covington, Louisiana, who had lived in New Orleans for nearly two decades. They raised four children: Florau, Mercedes, June Rose, and Joachim, Jr. Viola died on May 7, 1947, and Fernández subsequently married Jessie Nosacka.<sup>3</sup>

Fernández's political career began in 1921, the same year his father died, when he was elected as a delegate to the Louisiana state constitutional convention. He then won election to the Louisiana legislature and served for much of the 1920s. From 1924 to 1928, he represented New Orleans' Ninth Ward in the eastern portion of the city, where his family resided, in the state house of representatives. From 1928 through 1930, Fernández held a seat in the state senate encompassing the Eighth and Ninth Wards. Initially he was a party regular and was endorsed by the New Orleans Democratic machine.

Fernández's political star in Louisiana followed the arc of Huey Pierce Long's ascendancy. Long built his power base as a member of the state railroad commission from 1918 to 1928. Elected governor of Louisiana in 1928, "the Kingfish" won election as a U.S. Senator in November 1930, although he delayed taking his seat until January 1932. Long portrayed himself as a champion of the people and demonstrated a keen ability to develop a formidable, intensely loyal political organization. He controlled the state legislature, a massive patronage apparatus, and a portion of the congressional delegation. Long thrived on the one-party Southern Democratic system, where policy issues tended to be de-emphasized and politics were driven by intense factionalism and intense personalities. In the words of an eminent scholar of Southern politics, "Huey P. Long's control of Louisiana more nearly matched the power of a South American dictator than that of any other American state boss ... [even the strongest of whom] were weaklings alongside the Kingfish."<sup>4</sup>



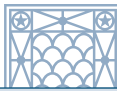
A product of New Orleans' hardscrabble electoral scene, Fernández was "marvelously adept at sniffing the political winds" and plotting his course accordingly.<sup>5</sup> During his successful bid for the state senate in 1928, Fernández ran as an anti-Long candidate, but after taking office, he switched his allegiance to the Kingfish and introduced Long's initiatives, including utility bills to bring natural gas into New Orleans. Over time, Fernández became known locally as "Bathtub Joe" because when unwanted callers, particularly New Orleans newspaper reporters, phoned him at home, he instructed his wife to tell them he was taking a bath.<sup>6</sup>

In 1930 the Louisiana 1st District encompassed much of New Orleans, including the Third through the Ninth Wards—sweeping from the modern-day Central Business District eastward through the French Quarter and ending at the Industrial Canal—and the Fifteenth Ward, which included Algiers, on the south bank of the Mississippi River. From the eastern portions of the city, the district swung south into the bayous, taking in Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes, which were Long's strongholds. Long, who was running for his Senate seat simultaneously, recruited Fernández to run in the district and lent him his formidable support against the six-term incumbent, Democrat James O'Connor. In throwing his allegiance behind Long, Fernández irrevocably severed his ties to City Hall and the Old Regulars Democratic machine. Founded shortly after the Civil War, the Old Regulars were "the only genuine big-city machine in the South" and were ruled by fewer than two dozen ward leaders, who controlled an army of 2,000 volunteers. For years they enjoyed disproportionate power because they controlled the state's largest city and thus had a large hand in electing the governor.<sup>7</sup> By defecting to the Long faction in 1930, and taking over as the group's leader in New Orleans' Ninth Ward, Fernández pitted himself against his old allies and their impressive political apparatus. As Paul Maloney, Long's handpicked candidate in the 1930 election for the neighboring 2nd District, recalled, Long was assembling his own pliant component of the congressional delegation: "Jimmie O'Connor was the Congressman in the first district. Jack String was the Congressman in the second

district, both had been in Congress for a good many years and both able men. When Huey Long then decided to run for the Senate and he wanted me, and when he got me, he thought he might just as well put somebody else up there [than] Jimmie O'Connor, and he got J. O. Fernández."<sup>8</sup>

In the September 10 primary, Fernández prevailed over O'Connor by a slender margin, 24,937 to 23,425 votes. O'Connor carried the city wards by several thousand votes, but Fernández ran his strongest in St. Bernard Parish, a largely rural swath of bayous that stretched south and east from Orleans Parish, and in neighboring Plaquemines Parish where he benefited from Long's accord with a local sheriff who led the principal political faction. The challenger received 5,061 votes in the two parishes compared with the incumbent's 322 votes.<sup>9</sup> In the 1930 general election, Fernández faced the only opposition he would ever encounter in November of an election year, the hapless Republican nominee John B. Murphy, whom he trounced by a margin of 30,629 to 1,335. Again the country parishes broke overwhelmingly in favor of Fernández and other Long-ites. As longtime New Orleans political reporter Hermann B. Deutsch noted, "The astonishing figures added the words 'a St. Bernard count' to Louisiana's political colloquial speech."<sup>10</sup> In his subsequent four general elections, Fernández ran unopposed, and the district boundaries were not altered.<sup>11</sup>

As a freshman, Fernández received an unusually favorable assignment on the Naval Affairs Committee, the forerunner to the modern Armed Services Committee.<sup>12</sup> It was a natural fit for a Member who hailed from a strategic maritime district that was home to the once-thriving Algiers Naval Station, a nearly one-square-mile repair and maintenance facility directly across the Mississippi River from New Orleans. With as many as 1,600 civilian workers during World War I, Algiers had fallen into disuse by the time Fernández entered Congress. By 1933 the navy had decommissioned the Algiers dry dock, and its civilian employees numbered barely one dozen.<sup>13</sup> Fernández served on the Naval Affairs Committee from the 72nd through the 74th Congresses (1931–1937) before winning a seat on the influential Appropriations Committee in the



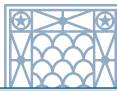
75th Congress (1937–1939), where he remained until leaving the House. On Appropriations he served on the subcommittee with oversight of naval expenditures.<sup>14</sup> Both the Naval Affairs and the Appropriations assignments ranked extremely high in terms of their attractiveness to Members of the House.<sup>15</sup>

Fernández's legislative workload primarily involved bills to assist individuals with issues such as pension adjustments, benefits, or discharge from military service.<sup>16</sup> Like many of his colleagues, he also sought federal dollars to advance local projects that involved acquiring land for the construction of levees, bridges, and streets; erecting public buildings such as post offices and a Veterans Administration hospital in Orleans Parish; surveying several bayous; establishing a Coast Guard station on Lake Pontchartrain, astride the northern part of the city; and securing mail contracts for local shipping companies. Throughout the 1930s, he also introduced a series of bills to establish Chalmette National Historical Park—now Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery, which is part of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, seven miles southeast of the city—to commemorate the Battle of New Orleans during the War of 1812.

When Fernández claimed his seat on the Naval Affairs Committee in 1931, the newly installed chairman was Carl Vinson, who would chair the panel for three decades, pumping vast resources to military planners who created the most powerful navy in the world by the end of the Second World War.<sup>17</sup> From bill proposals to reports, Fernández's work on the committee supported that expansion effort, particularly when it benefited the maritime facilities and interests of the port of New Orleans. In 1935, he supported an effort to permanently assign naval officers to the navy's burgeoning aeronautical engineering branch. Previous officers had rotated out, creating continuity problems.<sup>18</sup> Another measure doubled the amount of money the navy could spend, to \$600,000 every two years, to repair damage or upgrade equipment on existing ships. In the early 20th century, Fernández wrote in a committee report that the old cap was "quite sufficient." But, he explained, possibly with an eye toward boosting traffic at the Algiers facility, "In these later years, the situation has become

increasingly onerous, due to the increasing age of the ships and the improvements in the art of naval warfare, notably, the introduction of airplanes, improvements in torpedoes, and gunnery devices."<sup>19</sup> He supported a bill providing that military law would be applied to all individuals held in military prisons, regardless of their enlistment status. It would, Fernández explained, "eliminate the cumbersome, expensive, and unsatisfactory system of prosecuting in the Federal courts men whose enlistments have expired."<sup>20</sup> Finally, he authored a measure to provide \$25,000 per year in federal money, matching a state appropriation, to establish a nautical school in New Orleans "for the instruction of young men in navigation, marine engineering, and other nautical subjects," similar to schools in other major U.S. ports, such as New York and San Francisco.<sup>21</sup>

Fernández's House career was often entwined with Long's bid to cement his statewide power by wresting control of New Orleans' politics from the Old Regulars. By the fall of 1934, Long ran a slate of victorious candidates in the city, but his tactics—including instructing the subservient governor to call out the National Guard in New Orleans during the elections to intimidate the machine, which controlled the police force—raised criticisms.<sup>22</sup> Louisiana Representative Jared Y. Sanders, Jr., of Baton Rouge, the son of a former Congressman and Louisiana governor and a member of the anti-Long faction, compared Long's rule with that of Adolph Hitler and Joseph Stalin, calling him "the dictator" and a "ruthless, vicious, and corrupt" foe of democracy.<sup>23</sup> Fernández blunted Sanders's attack in a House Floor speech that received national press coverage.<sup>24</sup> Intimating that Sanders's father had employed his own heavy-handed tactics as governor, Fernández insisted that the 1934 Louisiana elections were by comparison "fair and square" and that Sanders was "unduly alarmed." He did admit, however, that his electoral success was due to his ties with Long's faction "because the people are with Senator Long."<sup>25</sup> Also, he inserted into the *Record* a number of news articles, including some by anti-Long outlets, attesting to the fairness of the elections.



Long's assassination in September 1935 at the state capitol building in Baton Rouge dealt a blow to Fernández's electoral fortunes. Eulogizing the Kingfish, Fernández noted, "This man who dared champion the cause of the masses went before the people of his beloved State, and he triumphed each successive time with greater majorities."<sup>26</sup> When Sam H. Jones, whom Fernández opposed, was elected governor in early 1940, carrying the First District by 17,000 votes, the warning signs were clear. Realizing his vulnerability, Fernández tried to head off primary opposition by advertising the accomplishments of his decade-long career. He inserted a speech into the *Congressional Record* stressing his attention to constituent services and his support for appropriations for the New Deal's Works Progress Administration (later the Works Projects Administration) to augment the city's infrastructure.<sup>27</sup>

F. Edward Hébert, a political columnist and city editor for the New Orleans *States* newspaper, had covered and helped publicize a series of revelations later dubbed the Louisiana Scandals about graft, corruption, and tax evasion by Long-ites.<sup>28</sup> In 1940 Hébert challenged Fernández in the Democratic primary, having garnered the support of the Old Regulars including New Orleans mayor Robert Maestri, former governor and disgruntled Long acolyte, James Noe, and Governor Jones. As an incumbent, Fernández enjoyed the support of local labor unions, with whom Hébert had always had a rocky relationship because he opposed the formation of a guild at the *States*. Fernández also received letters of support from Speaker of the House William B. Bankhead of Alabama and Majority Leader Sam Rayburn of Texas. Hébert assailed Fernández's inability to bring home enough federal money for the state despite his prime committee assignments. Hébert labeled the incumbent "Joe-Joe Zero," explaining years later that the epithet summarized "what my opponent had accomplished during ten years in Congress." Hébert dismissed the support of Bankhead and Rayburn as an acknowledgment of Fernández's party fealty, which he claimed trumped loyalty to his Louisiana constituency. "I can well believe that [Rayburn] heartily approved Mr. Fernandez because while the congressman from Louisiana

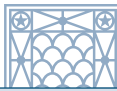
saw to it that Mr. Rayburn was getting fifty to sixty millions of dollars for Corpus Christi, Louisiana was getting not one red dime."<sup>29</sup>

That charge was exacerbated when the retired Algiers Naval Station dry dock was relocated to Pearl Harbor in the spring of 1940. "The Algiers yard goes on rusting" under Fernández's watch, complained the editors of the New Orleans *Item* newspaper. To bolster the facility, constituents needed a Representative with "strong character, exceptional address, and dogged persistence." "It long ago became apparent that Mr. Fernandez by no means fills the bill," the editors continued. "Even if he and his colleagues had not been ward-heeling down here for the corrupt statehouse machine ... it would have made no difference. For Mr. Fernandez simply lacks the qualifications required of a man who handles assignments of that sort." But the criticisms were not entirely accurate. After the navy mothballed Algiers, Fernández sought a use for the facility and arranged for the navy to allow the National Youth Administration to move in. The New Orleans Congressman also inserted a proviso into the Naval Supply Act of 1938, which President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law, calling for money to be expended "as may be necessary incident to the utilization of the Naval Station, New Orleans, LA., for vessels to be placed and maintained in a decommissioned status." As war loomed in Europe and Asia, Fernández lobbied Roosevelt to recommission Algiers by reinvesting in a facility that could refurbish up to 20 older destroyers and build light cruisers. He reminded the President that an enhanced naval presence in the Gulf of Mexico might deter interference in the region.<sup>30</sup>

Fernández responded to his Algiers critics by publishing his efforts in the *Congressional Record* Appendix and taking a thinly veiled swipe at Hébert by dismissing the "so-called learned college and university graduates, who get paid to push a pen behind an editor's desk and try to mold public opinion."<sup>31</sup> Soon afterward he directly attacked Hébert's credibility and work as a reporter.

Hébert countered by stressing Fernández's ties to the Long faction and urged New Orleanians to purge the last vestiges of the regime and vote for the candidate





approved by Governor Jones. Fernández, he concluded, was one of “this mob of diehards who can’t understand the writing on the wall. They can’t believe that after twelve years of ruthless plunderbund they have been counted out by the free and independent people of the state.”<sup>32</sup> On primary day, Hébert, joined by Hale Boggs, who ousted Representative Maloney in the adjoining district, prevailed over Fernández by a two to one margin. The election brought four pro-Jones candidates into the House, making five of the eight Louisiana delegation members allies of the reform movement spurred by the Louisiana Scandals. Fernández briefly entered the 1942 primary against Hébert, but dropped out early. Hébert cruised to re-election that year.<sup>33</sup>

Days after leaving the House in January 1941, Fernández was called to active duty as a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Naval Reserve. He served in that capacity until late September 1943, when he was appointed collector of internal revenue for the district of Louisiana. He served in that post for three years. In the fall of 1945, Fernández unexpectedly entered the mayoral race, adopting a 16-point reform package and promising civic improvement. Within months, he again surprised political observers by bowing out of the race and endorsing longtime incumbent Robert Maestri, who was unseated by reformer DeLesseps (Chep) Morrison.<sup>34</sup>

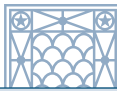
After retiring from politics, Fernández worked as a tax consultant. In 1951 he was hired by the state of Louisiana as a revenue examiner and as head of the income tax department. Fernández retired in New Orleans, where he passed away shortly before his 82nd birthday on August 8, 1978, after an extended illness. He was interred in Metairie Cemetery.<sup>35</sup>

## FOR FURTHER READING

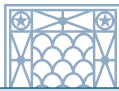
*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, “Joachim Octave Fernández,” <http://bioguide.congress.gov>.

## NOTES

- 1 *Congressional Record*, House, 74th Cong., 1st sess. (1 February 1935): 1372, 1374.
- 2 Information on Octave Fernandez was extracted from the 1880 and 1910 Federal Censuses and from a brief obituary in the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* (28 November 1920): 4. The 1910 census records list four additional siblings: Adele (15 years), Mary (11 years), John (8 years), and Elarita (5 years). According to the obituary, Mary’s name was actually Marie. See “Fernandez Rites Friday,” 10 August 1978, New Orleans *Times-Picayune*: 12. A death notice for Fernández lists another sibling, Louis, who was deceased. See “Death Notices,” 11 August 1978, New Orleans *Times-Picayune*: 14. For census information, see *Tenth Census of the United States, 1880: Population Schedule*, New Orleans, Orleans, Louisiana, Roll 462\_1254462, page 598B; and *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910: Population Schedule*, New Orleans, Orleans, Louisiana, Roll T624\_522, page 4A, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. <http://search.ancestrylibrary.com> (accessed 23 October 2012).
- 3 Glenn R. Conrad, ed., *A Dictionary of Louisiana Biography: Volume I, A to M* (New Orleans: The Louisiana Historical Association, 1988): 299; see also Viola Fernández’s death notice in the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* (8 May 1947): 2.
- 4 For an overview of Louisiana politics of the era, see V. O. Key, Jr., *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press; reprint 2006): 156–182, quotation on p. 156. For an important account about Long and his popular appeal, see Alan Brinkley, *Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin, & the Great Depression* (New York: Vintage, 1983).
- 5 T. Harry Williams, *Huey Long* (New York: Vintage Books, 1981): 300.
- 6 Williams, *Huey Long*: 300.
- 7 For more on the Old Regulars, sometimes referred to as the Choctaws in relation to a club associated with the machine, see Williams, *Huey Long*: 188–190; see also Allan P. Sindler, *Huey Long’s Louisiana: State Politics, 1920–1952* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1956), especially pp. 22–26 and 98–116.
- 8 T. Harry Williams Papers, Ms. 2489, Series IV. Oral History Interviews, Box 19, folder 109, interview with Paul Maloney on June 26, 1957: 14.
- 9 See “Tuesday’s Primary Results,” 11 September 1930, *New Orleans Times-Picayune*. Incredibly, Long outpolled his opponents by 3,979 to 9 votes. Moreover, the vote tally exceeded the eligible voting population by at least 1,500 votes. Cited in an Associated Press wire story published as “Harris’s Lead Grows,” 11 September 1930, *Washington Post*: 2.
- 10 Hermann B. Deutsch, “New Orleans Politics—The Greatest Free Show on Earth,” in Hodding Carter, ed., et al., *The Past as Prelude*:



- New Orleans, 1718–1968* (New Orleans: Tulane University Press, 1968): 331–332; Williams, *Huey Long*: 539–540. This figure is from Williams; Deutsch tallies the vote at 2,700 to 7.
- 11 “Election Statistics, 1920 to Present,” <http://history.house.gov/institution/election-statistics/election-statistics>.
  - 12 Fernández’s predecessor, James O’Connor, held the Naval Affairs assignment for two terms in the 1920s, and from the 1890s onward, a Member of the Louisiana delegation usually served on the panel.
  - 13 Joachim O. Fernández, “My Answer to the Unfair and Uncalled for Newspaper Attacks—Sufferers of Atavism,” *Congressional Record*, House, Extension of Remarks, 76th Cong., 3rd sess. (18 June 1940): 3981–3985. Statistics in the appendix about the number of ships and the number of personnel at the Algiers Naval Station were reprinted by Fernández.
  - 14 Fernández referenced this assignment on the House Floor: See *Congressional Record*, 76th Cong., 1st sess. (4 May 1939): 5125.
  - 15 Charles Stewart III, “Committee Hierarchies in the Modernizing House, 1875–1947,” *American Journal of Political Science* 36, no. 4 (November 1992): 835–856; see especially Stewart’s table “Committee Attractiveness,” p. 845. Appropriations ranked second throughout the 1930s; Naval Affairs ranked eighth.
  - 16 House Committee on Naval Affairs, *George Dewey Hilding*, 73rd Cong., 1st sess., 1933, H. Rep. 93: 1–11.
  - 17 Eventually dubbed “the Admiral,” Vinson was also known as “the Father of the Two-Ocean Navy.” For more on Vinson, see James F. Cook, *Carl Vinson: Patriarch of the Armed Forces* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2004).
  - 18 House Committee on Naval Affairs, *Authorize the Assignment of Officers of the Line of the Navy for Aeronautical Engineering Duty Only, and for Other Purposes*, 74th Cong., 1st sess., 1935, H. Rep. 541:1–3.
  - 19 House Committee on Naval Affairs, *Increasing the Statutory Limit of Expenditure for Repairs or Damages to Naval Vessels*, 74th Cong., 1st sess., 1935, H. Rep. 241: 1–4.
  - 20 House Committee on Naval Affairs, *Provide for Better Administration of Justice in the Navy*, 72nd Cong., 1st sess., 1932, H. Rep. 577: 1–3.
  - 21 House Committee on Naval Affairs, *Providing a Nautical School at the Port of New Orleans, La.*, 72nd Cong., 1st sess., 1932, H. Rep. 838: 1–3.
  - 22 For more on this period of Long’s reign of power in Louisiana politics, particularly as it relates to his efforts to make inroads in New Orleans, see Garry Boulard, *Huey Long Invades New Orleans: The Siege of a City, 1934–36* (Gretna, LA: Pelican, 1998). For an overview of the Long era in Louisiana politics, including the anti-Longs and the formation of the reform effort in state politics, see the edited compendium of previously published essays in Edward F. Haas, ed., *The Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial Series in Louisiana History, Volume VIII: The Age of the Longs: Louisiana 1928–1960* (Lafayette: Center for Louisiana Studies, 2001).
  - 23 *Congressional Record*, House, 74th Cong., 1st sess. (1 February 1935): 1368–1369.
  - 24 In a House Floor speech, Fernández had enthusiastically endorsed an unsuccessful effort to deny Sanders his House seat after his victory in the spring 1934 special election was contested. In retaliation, weeks before the Louisiana congressional primaries, Sanders publicly beseeched then-Majority Leader Joseph W. Byrns of Tennessee to dispatch a House committee to monitor the Louisiana elections because of the “inconceivable” conditions created by the Long machine and alluded to Fernández’s primary as an example. In early September, Sanders sent a telegram asking President Franklin D. Roosevelt to block Governor O. K. Allen’s mobilization of the Louisiana National Guard, which he interpreted as an attempt by the Long faction to intimidate voters. See *Congressional Record*, House, 73rd Cong., 2nd sess. (16 April 1934): 1519; “Long Issue Debated in the House,” 2 February 1935 *New York Times*: 5; *Congressional Record*, House, 74th Cong., 1st sess. (1 February 1935): 1372–1375.
  - 25 *Congressional Record*, House, 74th Cong., 1st sess. (1 February 1935): 1372, 1374.
  - 26 *Congressional Record*, House 74th Cong., 2nd sess. (21 April 1936): 5808.
  - 27 See Joachim O. Fernández, “I Am a Candidate for Re-election,” *Congressional Record*, House, Extension of Remarks, 76th Cong., 3rd sess. (11 March 1940): 1331–1333.
  - 28 For Hébert’s account of the campaign, see F. Edward Hébert with John McMillan, *Last of the Titans: The Life and Times of Congressman F. Edward Hébert of Louisiana* (Lafayette: Center for Louisiana Studies, The University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1976): 154–160. For more on the downfall of the Long regime, see Betty M. Field, “The Louisiana Scandals,” in *The Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial Series in Louisiana History, Volume VIII: The Age of the Longs*: 271–284.
  - 29 Hébert, *Last of the Titans*: 157–158.
  - 30 *Congressional Record*, House, Extension of Remarks, 76th Cong., 3rd sess. (18 June 1940): 3982–3983.
  - 31 *Ibid.*, 3981.
  - 32 Hébert, *Last of the Titans*: 159.
  - 33 *Ibid.*, 168. Hébert went on to an epic career as an old-line Dixiecrat—serving 18 consecutive terms in the House and eventually chairing the Armed Services Committee.
  - 34 See Edward F. Haas, *DeLesseps S. Morrison and the Image of Reform: New Orleans Politics, 1946–1961* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1974): 28–33. Fernández claimed he left the race because he did not have the backing of prominent politicians, including the governor. Some speculated that the mayor had planted Fernández as a stalking horse or that Fernández had profited by backing out. In actuality, Fernández agreed to withdraw if Maestri would pay his campaign expenses (roughly \$35,000), though he refused to accede to the mayor’s wish that he wait to withdraw from



the race until the filing deadline had passed. Hébert, who subscribed to the theory that the Old Regulars had planted Fernández in the race, observed, “Fernández being put forward as a reformist candidate almost defies imagination, but clearly demonstrates how silly politics was in New Orleans.” Hébert, *Last of the Titans*: 229–230.

35 “Fernandez Rites Friday.”